

MINUTES
FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
August 27, 2020

Policy Members Present: Rosalyn Fry, City of Aztec
Julie Baird, City of Farmington
Jeanine Bingham-Kelly, City of Farmington
Sean Sharer, City of Farmington
Paul Brasher, NMDOT, District 5

Policy Members Absent: John Beckstead, San Juan County
Glojean Todacheene, San Juan County
Thomas Wethington, Town of Kirtland

Staff Present: Peter Koepfel, MPO Officer
Kathryn Leys, MPO Associate Planner
June Markle, MPO Administrative Assistant

Staff Absent: None

Others Present: Aaron Sussman, Bohannon Huston
Beth Escobar, Planning Manager, City of
Farmington
Joseph Moriarty, Planning Liaison, NMDOT

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 health concern, the members of the Policy Committee listed above as "Policy Members Present" attended via the GoToMeeting link as did Beth Escobar and Joseph Moriarty. Chair Sharer, Kathryn Leys and June Markle attended in person.

Chair Sharer reminded the members when a vote is called it will be assumed that all are voting in the affirmative unless an objection(s) is raised.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sharer called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE JUNE 25, 2020 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Mr. Brasher moved to approve the minutes from the June 25, 2020 Policy Committee meeting. Commissioner Fry seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with no opposition.

3. REVIEW AND PROVIDE COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED FINAL VERSION OF THE 2045 MTP

Subject:	Review and provide comments on the proposed final version of the 2045 MTP
Prepared by:	Aaron Sussman, Planner, Bohannon Huston and Peter Koepfel, MPO Officer
Date:	August 27, 2020

BACKGROUND

- The Consulting Services Agreement with Bohannon Huston, Inc. (BHI) as the consultant for development of the FMPO's 2045 MTP was effective August 14, 2019.
- The final 2045 MTP is to be considered for adoption by the Policy Committee at their September 24, 2020 meeting.
- The FMPO Technical Committee is to serve as the Steering Committee.
- Public participation events have included:
 - Survey Monkey to share thoughts on regional transportation
 - Online updates on the project at: <http://fmppo2045mtp.bhinc.com>
 - Public events on October 17 and 18, 2019 in Aztec, Bloomfield, Kirtland, and two locations in Farmington;
 - Two virtual open houses were held on June 24, 2020 to gather public comment;
 - Two additional virtual open houses were held on August 13 to gather public comment on the final draft 2045 MTP document.
- Aaron Sussman, Senior Planner with BHI, has provided monthly updates on development of the MTP to the Technical Committee.
- The proposed draft 2045 MTP was distributed on August 3, 2020 to Technical Committee members for their review and comments and they discussed the draft at their meeting on August 12.
- The proposed draft 2045 MTP was distributed to Policy Committee members on August 13, 2020. Mr. Sussman will provide a summary presentation to the Policy Committee on August 27.

CURRENT WORK

- The 30-day public notice was posted on July 26, 2020 (in both English and Spanish) to cover public comment periods and public hearings for the August Committee meetings to review the proposed draft 2045 MTP and also for the September Committee meetings to consider adoption of the final proposed 2045 MTP.
- Review the proposed draft 2045 MTP.

INFORMATION ITEM

- Staff recommends that the Policy Committee review and provide any comments to the proposed draft 2045 MTP.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS

- 23 CFR § 450.324 Development and content of the metropolitan transportation plan

DISCUSSION: Aaron Sussman provided a presentation on the proposed final draft FMPO's 2045 MTP. Below is a summary of his presentation:

Development Process

- Five-year update to the 2040 MTP
 - Responds to changing conditions in region:
 - Updated socioeconomic information
 - Recent traffic volume data
 - Recent and proposed projects identified
 - Evolving transportation priorities.
- Planning efforts began in fall 2019 with monthly updates to the Technical Committee throughout 2020;
- Public Outreach: fall/winter 2019/2020 and virtual open houses in June and August 2020
- Draft MTP available on August 10 for public comment; closes on September 9.

Growth Projections

Population growth projected to be much higher in previous MTP; revised from 40% to 7% total growth between 2010 and 2040;

Changing age dynamics: an increasing share of senior citizens (considers who is commuting, types of transportation needs (fewer citizens driving themselves), and economic conditions.

MTP Contents

- Chapter List (some required by state and federal law)
 - Introduction/MTP Requirements
 - Socioeconomic Conditions
 - Summary of Public Outreach
 - Roadways/MTP Projects
 - Safety
 - Public Transit
 - Bicycle/Pedestrian
 - Freight
 - Climate Change
 - Security
 - Implementation
- Contents by Chapter
 - Existing Conditions

- Long-term Needs
- Recommendations and Action Items

MTP Projects List

Identify transportation projects through 2045 using best information available:

- Near-term projects – funding has been identified
- Long-term projects – specific funding has not been identified
- Other projects will emerge that are not on the current MTP project list – be consistent with MTP goals and objectives to remain eligible for federal funding.

Key Near-Term Projects (mostly ongoing or upcoming efforts)

- Completion of US 64
- NM 173 Safety Improvements (toward Navajo Lake)
- Bridge Replacements (CR 5500 and East Blanco in Bloomfield)
- East Aztec Arterial
- Downtown Complete Streets
 - Main Street in Farmington
 - Main Avenue in Aztec (complementary to East Aztec Arterial)
- Pinon Hills Boulevard Extension

Regional Roadway Analysis

Use of the regional travel model to evaluate existing and future roadway conditions:

Where congestion exists, it is related to individual intersections and not to a lack of roadways or network. Issue is best addressed through operational improvements rather than by additional capacity.

Future growth levels are modest; no significant increases in congestion are projected.

FMPO Regional Story

Modest population growth; evolving economic conditions;

Opportunity to invest in the existing transportation system;

Rehabilitation/reconstruction projects can feature safety improvements, access management, and multi-modal infrastructure;

Growing emphasis on Complete Streets projects and trails;

Focus spending on projects that support quality of life and new economic opportunities (outdoor recreation/tourism).

Major Recommendations

- Maintain existing system; use limited funding wisely
- Emphasize roadway efficiency improvements
- Use roadway rehabilitation as opportunity to implement safety improvement, bicycle and pedestrian facilities;
- Build on growing network of bikeways and trails:
 - Implement Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
 - Expand upon trails network
 - Update regional transportation design manual (Context Sensitive Design Guide)
- Corridor studies – safety and access management
- Regional Safety Action Plan
- Regional Transit Action Plan
 - Respond to public demand for transit improvements

- Construction of downtown transit hub.
- Regional Coordination
 - Economic development initiatives
 - Connections to outdoor recreation/tourism sites
 - Land use – integrate MTP with Comprehensive Plans

Chair Sharer opened a public hearing on the proposed final draft of the 2045 MTP. No comments were received; the public hearing was closed.

4. AMENDMENT #4 TO THE FFY2020-2025 TIP

Subject:	Amendment #4 to the FFY2020-2025 TIP
Prepared by:	Peter Koeppel, MPO Officer
Date:	August 27, 2020

BACKGROUND

- The firsts Call for Projects for the FFY2020-2025 TIP Amendment #3 was sent out on June 22, 2020; a reminder sent out on July 13.
- The Public Notice for Amendment #4 to the FFY2020-2025 TIP was published on the MPO's website and in the Daily Times on August 9.
- The amendment currently includes a City of Farmington project and an NMDOT project.
- The Technical Committee recommended the Policy Committee consider approval of proposed Amendment #4 and the Self-Certification for Amendment #4 to Policy Committee at their meeting on August 12.

AMENDED TIP PROJECTS

- City of Farmington's East Pinon Hills Boulevard Extension.
- NMDOT's NM 173 Safety project.

ATTACHMENTS

- The e-STIP descriptions for Amendment #4 to the FFY2020-2025 TIP.
- The Self-Certification for Amendment #4 to the FFY2020-2025 TIP.

ACTION ITEM

- Staff recommends that the Policy Committee approve proposed Amendment #4 and the Self-Certification for Amendment #4 to the FFY2020-2025 TIP.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS

- § 450.328 TIP revisions and relationship to the STIP.
- (a) An MPO(s) may revise the TIP at any time under procedures agreed to by the cooperating parties consistent with the procedures established in this part for its development and approval. In nonattainment or maintenance areas for

transportation-related pollutants, if a TIP amendment involves non-exempt projects (per 40 CFR part 93), or is replaced with an updated TIP, the MPO(s) and the FHWA and the FTA must make a new conformity determination. In all areas, changes that affect fiscal constraint must take place by amendment of the TIP. The MPO(s) shall use public participation procedures consistent with § 450.316(a) in revising the TIP, except that these procedures are not required for administrative modifications.) After approval by the MPO(s) and the Governor, the State shall include the TIP without change, directly or by reference, in the STIP required under 23 U.S.C. 135. In nonattainment and maintenance areas, the FHWA and the FTA must make a conformity finding on the TIP before it is included in the STIP. A copy of the approved TIP shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA.

- (c) The State shall notify the MPO(s) and Federal land management agencies when it has included a TIP including projects under the jurisdiction of these agencies in the STIP.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Koepfel reported on the two projects included in TIP Amendment #4:

City of Farmington's East Pinon Hills Boulevard Extension Phase I: Add \$250,000 in Local General Funds in FFY2023 and to split Phase I into additional phases and to finish the design for Phase I.

NMDOT is proposing to add \$100,000 in FFY2021 on the safety improvement project on NM 173 for the design consultant to have staff onsite during construction should anything unexpected arise.

The Technical Committee recommended their approval on August 12 and FMPO staff recommends approval as well.

ACTION: Ms. Baird moved to approved TIP Amendment #4 and the Self-Certification for Amendment #4 to the FFY2020-2025 TIP. Commissioner Fry seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

5. PROPOSED TITLE VI PLAN

Subject:	Proposed Title VI Plan
Prepared by:	Peter Koepfel, MPO Officer
Date:	August 27, 2020

BACKGROUND

- The first Title VI Plan for the FMPO was adopted on June 20, 2013.
- A revised Title VI Plan was adopted by the Policy Committee on September 13, 2017.
- A new Title VI Plan is due every three (3) years in accordance with the NMDOT Policy & Procedure Manual (PPM).

CURRENT WORK

- The 30-day public notice was advertised on July 26, 2020 (in both English and Spanish) to cover public comment periods and public hearings held in August and September for consideration and review of both the draft and final proposed Title VI Plan.
- The Policy and Technical Committees will review and provide input at their August meetings.
- Hold a public hearing at the Policy Committee meeting on August 27.

INFORMATION ITEM

- Staff recommends that the Technical Committee review and provide input on the proposed Title VI Plan for the FMPO.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS

- As a recipient of federal assistance the Farmington MPO is subject to Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, as amended, and must ensure that no one is discriminated against based on race, color, or national origin.
- NMDOT's Construction and Civil Rights Bureau requires all subrecipients of federal funds to update or review their Title VI Plan at least every three years.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Koepfel explained the requirement for the FMPO to comply with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and to ensure that no one is discriminated against based on race, color, or national origin. The FMPO must prepare and issue a new Title VI Plan every three years. Mr. Koepfel asked the Policy Committee to provide any recommended changes or edits they believe should be incorporated. Final consideration of the Title VI Plan will be taken in September.

Chair Sharer opened the public hearing on the proposed Title VI Plan. No comments were received and the public hearing was closed.

6. QUARTERLY EDUCATION: FHWA – ROAD DIETS

Subject:	Quarterly Education: FHWA – Road Diets
Prepared by:	Kathryn Leys, MPO Associate Planner
Date:	August 27, 2020

PRESENTATION

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) remains committed to reducing highway fatalities and serious injuries on our Nation's roadways through the use of proven safety countermeasures, including **Road Diets**. Road Diets have the potential to improve safety, convenience, and quality of life for all road users. Road Diets can be relatively low cost if

planned in conjunction with reconstruction or simple overlay projects since applying Road Diets consists primarily of restriping.

The attached handout from the FHWA answers some of the most frequently asked questions about Road Diets and provides additional resource on how to determine if a Road Diet is appropriate for your community.

https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/road_diets/resources/pdf/fhwasa17021.pdf

DISCUSSION: Ms. Leys present the quarterly education on the topic of Road Diets. She explained how the classic use of a road diet converts a four-lane undivided roadway to a three-lane roadway, but there are many other methods being used by local and state governments. The reduced lane width tends to improve roadway safety by calming traffic, reducing head-on crashes, and allowing for dedicated space for other users such as pedestrians and bicycles. An attachment on Pages 31-34 of the Agenda from FHWA provides some answers to questions about how a road diet might be implemented to assist individual communities.

Ms. Leys mentioned the road diet that the City of Farmington is constructing along Main Street in downtown Farmington. Chair Sharer commented that he has received no negative calls or comments from his constituents about any slowdowns on the new section of Main Street. Ms. Leys also noted that the East Aztec Arterial under construction now in Aztec could provide support for a road diet along their Main Avenue.

REPORTS FROM NMDOT

District 5 – Paul Brasher, District Engineer

The last four miles of the US 64 widening project is nearing completion. Some issues were encountered with the Echo Ditch area and with the signalization at the Andrea Drive intersection. Those issues were resolved.

Construction of the La Plata Bridge on NM 574 has been completed.

District 5 is also undertaking a maintenance project to repave Murray Drive (the bypass route). He reported that there will be some disruption to traffic during the construction. Chair Sharer said the City of Farmington is excited about the repaving project as Murray Drive is heavily traveled by truck traffic.

Planning Bureau – Joseph Moriarty, Planning Liaison

NMDOT has recently updated their website and the Tribal/Local Public Agency (T/LPA) program page has been relocated. The FMPO can provide your member agencies with the exact link.

The Unified Planning Work Programs for FFY2021-2022 have been approved by FHWA. The Notice to Proceed from NMDOT is expected to be issued to the FMPO in mid to late September.

The update on the New Mexico 2045 Plan is proceeding. The final 2045 Plan document is expected to be completed in mid-year 2021.

8. COMMITTEE MEMBER DISCUSSION ITEMS

Subject:	Committee Member Discussion Items
Date:	August 27, 2020

DISCUSSION ITEMS

There were no additional discussion items provided by Policy Committee members for inclusion in the Agenda.

9. INFORMATION ITEMS

Subject:	Information Items
Prepared by:	MPO Staff
Date:	August 27, 2020

INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. **Virtual Open Houses.** Staff will provide an update on the 2045 MTP virtual open houses held on August 13, 2020.
- b. **Consider Resuming Meeting Rotation.** At the June 25 meeting, there was consensus to consider holding the meetings at the MPO Office instead of rotating among the entities. The Policy Committee asked that this be reassessed at the August meeting.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Koepfel noted that the virtual open houses for the 2045 MTP held on August 13 were fairly well attended and substantive comments were received regarding the Complete Streets project, public transit, and coordinating with regional neighbors.

Chair Sharer asked the Policy Committee members if they wanted to continue to hold the meetings at the MPO Office or resume the meeting rotation among the entities. The consensus was to hold the remaining 2020 meetings (in September and November) at the MPO Office and to reassess resuming the meeting rotation in 2021.

10. BUSINESS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS AND STAFF

There was no business from the Chairman, Members and Staff.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY ISSUES NOT ON THE AGENDA

There was no public comment on any issues not on the agenda

12. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Bingham-Kelly moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Brasher seconded the motion. Chair Sharer adjourned the meeting at 11:04 a.m.



Sean Sharer, Policy Committee Chair



June Markle, Administrative Assistant